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Russian Federation

Problems relating to the socio-economic development and culture of small indigenous minorities have since 1991 been addressed through special federal programmes designed to facilitate the achievement by indigenous peoples of sustainable development, based on the principles of self-sufficiency through comprehensive development of traditional economic practices. Priorities include improvement of indigenous peoples' resource and production base, spiritual and ethnocultural development, and health.

The foundations of State policy for the socio-economic development of indigenous peoples are as follows:

- Laws and regulations adopted over the past several years;
- The Russian Federation's medium-term programme for socio-economic development, as approved in a government directive of July 2001;
- The plan of action to implement the Russian Federation's concept of State support for the economic and social development of districts of the North under new economic circumstances, as approved in a government decision of March 2001;
- The special federal programme "Children of the North", within the framework of the presidential programme "Children of Russia".

The related special laws and statutory instruments of the Russian Federation establish the particular rights of small indigenous minorities to their own socio-economic and cultural development and to conservation of their indigenous habitat, traditional way of life and management of natural resources. They include the following federal acts: Rights of Small Indigenous Minorities of the Russian

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Federation (Guarantees), of 16 April 1999; Communities of Small Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East (General Organizational Principles), of 6 July 2000; and Territories of Traditional Natural Resource Use (Small Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East), of 4 April 2001.

In addition, a number of federal sectoral acts concerning natural resource use and State regulation of the North's socio-economic development also set out principles to protect the rights of indigenous peoples. These include the following federal acts: Animal World, of 24 April 1995; Specially Protected Natural Areas, of 14 March 1995; Protection of the Environment, of 10 January 2002; Mineral Resources, of 21 February 1992; and Payments for Land, of 11 October 1991.

Action is being taken, under the concept of State support for the economic and social development of districts of the North under new economic circumstances, to implement the special federal programme "Economic and Social Development of Small Indigenous Minorities of the North up to the year 2011". This action includes:

- Creating, through district hospitals and clinics, a network of stations for remote medicine to facilitate consultations with clinical centres in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnoyarsk, etc. (29 entities of the Russian Federation in all), and dispatching integrated medical teams from the country's central medical facilities to examine children in the remote northern territories;
- Introducing new educational technologies for the teaching of children in the northern territories: delivery of equipment for computer classes; creation of new educational software; publication of teaching aids and literature in indigenous languages;
- Supporting the children of the North's artistic activity and the traditional artistic pursuits of indigenous peoples;
- Organizing competitions in local sports and supporting children's and adolescents' sports schools, associations, sections and their acquisition of sports appliances.

The education of children from the small indigenous minorities is a recognized element of the Russian education system. The fundamental principles are as follows: the right to be taught in one's native language; application of the State's educational standards; and application of the general requirements for various levels of educational programmes with due regard for the national-territorial structure of the Russian Federation, which is home to various peoples, ethnic and linguistic groups and presents regional and local peculiarities.

According to information from Russia's State Statistical Committee for 2002, there were some 6,000 pre-school facilities in the Far North and associated areas, servicing more than 542,000 children.

There are currently 664 general schools in the North, Siberia and the Far East which offer teaching in 23 languages of the North's small indigenous minorities to more than 100,000 children. Thus, for example, the Dolgan language is being learned by 1,011 children at 3 schools; Itelmen by 88 children at 2 schools; Ket by 117 children at 9 schools; Koryak by 710 children at 21 schools; and Mansi by 1,057 children at 12 schools.

The network of elementary vocational training institutions in the Russian Federation's northern territories has enough places to meet the requirements of students from the small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

The northern territories' annual projected quotas for training of qualified workers and specialists in elementary vocational training institutions provide for an intake of members of the small indigenous minorities at such institutions.

The list of skills for which elementary vocational training is provided, as confirmed in a decision of the Government of the Russian Federation dated 8 December 1999, includes 292 items, of which 34 are taught at elementary vocational training institutions to members of the small minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

The biggest demand among the small minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East is for training in skills linked to traditional artistic pursuits, as well as reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing.

With a view to training teachers for ethnic schools, the Russian Ministry of Education in 1998 introduced the subject "Native language and literature" into the classified list of specializations for intermediate vocational training. Those specializing in this subject become qualified as "teachers of native language and literature at a basic general school". Graduates learn about the system and levels of the native language, its cognates and typological relationships with other languages, history, current status and evolutionary trends, as well as about native literature and folklore, native children's literature, cultural history of the indigenous people and literature of related peoples.

The specialization "Fine arts and drawing" now includes an additional training component on the technology of folk-art painting. Graduates qualify as teachers of fine arts and drawing with additional training in the technology of folk-art painting.

The curriculum for the specialization "Teaching in elementary classes" now includes such subjects as "Ethnography", "Ethno-choreography" and "Lessons from our ancestors".

The Palan Teacher Training College was established in 1990 in the Koryak Autonomous Area. Of its 132 students, 90 per cent are members of the indigenous peoples of the North and are fully supported by the State. Training is provided in three specializations: "Teaching in elementary classes"; "Pre-school education"; and "Extra-curricular teaching". An ethno-regional component has been introduced into the curriculum, with subjects such as ethnic applied arts (work with fur and beads), ethno-choreography, local history, native languages (Koryak, Even and Itelmen), and the culture and way of life of the peoples of the North.

The curriculum for all specializations includes the subject "Fine and decorative-applied arts of the peoples of the North" as an option.

The Russian Ministry of Education is presently conducting work on ensuring access for young people to advanced vocational training. The problem is being addressed both by setting up universities in the republics and by opening branches of colleges where populations are compact.

The Yugor State University was set up in Khanty-Mansiisk in 2001. More than 70 branches of the country's higher education institutions have now been opened,

including branches of colleges in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Novosibirsk. 11 have been opened in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area alone; 17 in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area; 11 in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia); 8 in the Komi Republic; 4 in the Chukchi Autonomous Area; and 2 in the Agin-Buryat Autonomous Area.

Furthermore, to assist with the training of members of the small indigenous minorities of the North, the Russian Ministry of Education provides support to the administrations of corresponding entities of the Russian Federation which request help in the assignment of places at colleges within the quotas financed by the federal budget. For example, in 2002 the Ministry supported requests from the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) to assign 1,017 places, and from the Tyva Republic for a further 460 places.

The small indigenous minorities of the North are given priority entry to the State Polar Academy in St. Petersburg. The number of students from the small minorities of the North (784 as of 1 January 2002, with plans to admit 200 for the academic year 2002-2003), together with payments for subsistence, study materials, summer vacation travel and placement on graduation are determined by the Ministry on the basis of applications from the State Polar Academy, which are granted in full.

Under the Russian Constitution and acts on Education and Rights of Small Indigenous Minorities of the Russian Federation, the publication of books in various languages for schools where members of the small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East are taught is financed by the Ministry of Education from the federal budget.

Textbooks are published not only in different languages but also in different dialects. For example, there are textbooks in four dialects of the Khanty language: Kazym, Shuryshkar, Surgut and Vakh; and in two dialects of the Nivkh and Nenets languages.

Under the programme "Children of the North", the Institute of National Education Problems in 2001-2002 produced course programmes, teaching aids and dictionaries in the Evenk, Nivkh and Nanai languages for those studying at elementary schools in areas populated by the small indigenous minorities of the North; and, for classes 5 to 9 at Koryak, Yukagir, Dolgan and Nivkh schools and classes 10 to 11 at Nanai, Chukchi and Eskimo schools, bilingual dictionaries and teaching aids on traditional trades, pursuits and other forms of economic activity of the peoples of the North.

In 2002, the Russian Ministry of Education concluded contracts amounting to 13,700,000 Russian roubles for the publication of textbooks for the small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

A legislative basis for culture which recognizes the cultural peculiarities of the small indigenous minorities of the Far North and associated areas of the Russian Federation has now been established countrywide. Under the country's Constitution, culture and protection of the rights of ethnic minorities are the joint responsibility of the Federation and its constituent entities. Federal acts, including those on the Foundations of Russian Federation Legislation on Culture, of 9 October 1992, National-Cultural Autonomy, of 17 June 1996, and the Rights of Small Indigenous Minorities of the Russian Federation, of 30 April 1999, set out the legal foundations of State policy in support of the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Far North.

State social policy, including policy on culture in areas of the Far North, is implemented by the executive authorities of the Russian Federation with the assistance of various instruments, including special federal programmes. Thus, under the special federal programme "Culture of Russia (2001-2005)", the Russian Ministry of Culture must provide for partial funding of the projects to protect and promote the cultures of peoples and ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation, including the Far North.

In view of the specifics of the Far North, support is also provided to non-federal activities. In 2002, for example, these included the traditional "Ysyakh" rite-festival of the Yakut people, folklore-ethnographic expeditions to the *ulusy* of Yakutia, support for the activities of the "Imlya" national Eskimo assembly (Chukotka), equipping a studio to produce Khanty-Mansi traditional musical instruments, etc.

Quotas have been established for the members of certain small indigenous minorities living in the Far North to attend colleges of culture and art.